No. 5

Hemorrhoids.

Isaac Telfair

admitted March 9th 1821.

# Hæmorrhoids

## or Piles

Piles are tumours, situated about the lower part of the Rectum. When within the verge of the anus, they are called Internal, and when exterior to it, the External Piles. Hæmorrhoids are sometimes attended with a discharge of blood, and are then called Bleeding or Open Piles; when this discharge does not take place they are called Caecæ, or Blind Piles

These tumours are supposed to consist of enlarged or varicose Hæmorrhoidal veins, enveloped either by the lining membrane of the Rectum, or (when external) by the common integuments. When we compress them between our thumb and finger, a pulsation is distinctly felt, by the latter member; affording sufficient evidence that arteries also enter into the composition of these tumours. Ar Ware observes that the Blind Piles are so soft and thin as evidently to be ~~composed of a~~ formed by a varicose or distended state of the Hæmorrhoidal veins, yet he has reason to believe that a thickening of the pelicle, or folds of the membrane which lines the intestinum-

rectum

is more frequently the cause of these Tumours, than a varicose, or enlarged state of the blood vessels of the part. Mr Earl in his treatise on this subject says that on their first protrusion they contain nothing but coagulated blood, this stagnating in the Hemorrhoidal veins, or possibly under the internal coat of the rectum, may in time become organized. this organic mass, being irritated by frequent pressure, becomes in time a firm and fleshy excrescence.

In the various stages of this affection, or under its different circumstances, these Tumours may assume a nature resembling either of the descriptions I have written. The Internal Piles when situated high up in the rectum, project into it, in the form of berries, are generally two or three in number, and are soft, and loose in their texture. But being irritated by the parts adjacent, and from other causes they swell, inflame, and in this state give great pain; at this period they frequently burst and discharge blood copiously, thus giving

ease

to the sufferer, but sometimes the discharge is so profuse as to endanger life, which is said to have been the cause of the death of the celebrated philosopher Copernicus. Neither is this discharge always preceded by pain, and other premonitory symptoms, but is often the first evidence of the existence of Haemorrhoids. This discharge in some instances, relieves affections of the head, chest, and is generally good for the general health, hence it ought not to be checked unless, debility, and other circumstances require that it should be done. The internal piles ~~of~~ long standing (when they do not relieve themselves by a discharge) completely change their nature, assuming pretty much the appearance described by Mr Earl. Their contents coagulate their coats increase in thickness, and they resemble, pendulous excrescent tumours in other parts of the body, these increasing in size are expelled by the action of the gut and efforts at stool beyond the sphincter ani muscle. On their first protrusion

they may be replaced, but as they increase in size this becomes more difficult, and they finally remain permanently external, forming the External Piles

The External Piles, are thus most frequently the consequence of the internal. On their first protrusion, they may resemble a red elevated ring surrounding the anus, or they may be in the form of separate distinct lobes, one of which is generally observed to be more elevated, inflamed, harder, and more painful than the rest. Great pain is experienced on sitting down, & in going to stool, this symptom may be relieved when the part can be replaced within the sphincter ani muscle; but the only permanent relief sought by nature is a discharge of blood which sometimes takes place, When this does not occur, the tumours are irritated by pressure, assume a foul, malignant appearance, and discharge a bloody sanies, increase so considerably in size, as in some instances to

press upon the neck of the bladder, producing much irritation and even pain in voiding urine. They may be attended with considerable inflammation, which proceeding to suppuration, may lay the foundation of Fistula in Ano. They are sometimes so strangulated by the action of the sphincter ani muscle as to prevent the circulation in them, they mortify, slough, and thus effect a natural cure analogous to an operation recommended by Mr Pott (the Great Surgeon -) but certainly much more tedious, painful, and dangerous. Death seldom or never occurs from this affection but it produces a train of most distressing symptoms, which are so conspicuous as to catch the notice of the friendly physician as he walks along the street, in this state, life is a burden to the patient, being prevented from pursuing its necessary avocations and from blending with them pleasant recreation. His spirits, and flesh decay, and he would probably sink into the grave, but for the friendly hand of Surgery -

The Piles have a resemblance to several other excrescences about these parts, such as enlargements of the sebaceous glands about the anus - to excrescences arising from venereal or cancerous dispositions in the habit, or to protrusions of the rectum. But they may with great ease be distinguished from these affections. The disease to which it bears the closest resemblance is Cancer of the rectum - Both are hard, swelled, and painful, the discharge is similar, and the same leaden, pallid countenance, attends both, But in a cancerous protrusion, the base is broader, harder, more incompressible, and has its origin higher up the rectum, commonly occupying the whole circumference of the intestine, which so narrows the passage, that the fæces are expelled with difficulty. In cancerous affections of the rectum the parts sometimes feel soft, like rotten substances the pain of cancerous, or malignant fungi, is unremitting, whether they remain external, or are returned within the sphincter ani. The patient

is

never at ease, but complains of shooting pains in the lumbar region. In both cases anodyne injections give relief, but less in cancerous —

These remarks may serve to distinguish the Piles, from other generences about the rectum

Concerning the causes of Hemorrhoids —

When we reflect, on the situation, structure, and various connections of the parts affected, we may readily conceive of the various and numerous causes which may induce Piles, any thing which tends to impede the circulation in the part, or to determine the flow of blood tumultuously may ~~induce~~ cause them. Hence they are often connected with an inert state of the bowels, Diseases of the liver, Dropsy & Pregnancy. Riding on Horseback, is said to induce them, but I know several instances in which the patient has been relieved by this kind of exercise, But independant of all these causes. Piles, are sometimes induced by primary local irritation, this irritation, causes the lax internal coat of the

of the gut to swell, while the muscular fibers contracting push the swelling down as it would matter in the gut, at the same time they constrict the Haemorrhoidal veins, the loose cellular coat is filled with blood, and thus occasion the Piles.

The Treatment of this disease, must be regulated by a view of its causes & condition. If they have been proceeded from Dropsy, a diseased state of the Liver, or if it be caused by pregnancy, we may not expect a cure until these causes are removed. When the Piles proceede from constipation, (an indolent state of the bowels, (which is the most frequent cause) Laxatives are indicated, and in selecting from this class of remedies, we should be particularly careful to choose those only which act on the alimentary canal, without having their action determined in any great degree, to the rectum. Those also who are liable to these affections should carefully abstain from aloetic purgatives,

a combination of Sulphur and cream of Tartar, is the Laxative most frequently recommended. Should the Piles proceed from or be attended with a relaxed or debilitated state of the bowels, the internal use of Wards paste will be found useful, by restoring strength and tone to them. This Nostrum is said by Home to act specifically on the Hemorrhodal vessels, as Balsam Copaiva on those of the urethra. Remedies of this character together with some astringent applications, will in general remove the mildest forms of this disease —

But should they be ~~much~~ attended with much pain, and inflammatory Symptoms must be assuaged. The Inflammation should more particularly command our attention, and endeavours, to prevent its terminating in suppuration, this from the structure of the parts being very apt to produce fistula in ano — Leeches should be applied, also Bledgets wet with a solution of

of Lead or zinc – various Emollient ointments are also useful such as the stramonium, the cicuta &c. Hot water applied by means of a bidet or semicupium is said by Mr Rose to give relief by taking off the tension of the tumified vessels and it has occasionally excited a discharge from them –

– When the Inflammation has been reduced, we may then recur to the use of astringent remedies, of these the gall ointment is the most common. When the Piles are attended with a prolapsus ani they should be washed with some astringent solution, such as the decoction of oak bark then returned to their natural situation and retained there by a graduated compress. When the Piles are strangulated by the action of the sphincter ani – (which is a frequent and troublesome attendant on these tumours) we should introduce a bougie up the rectum, this instrument causes the disappearance of the tumours, either by pressure on them, or by overcoming the structure

which

which bends them above.

When this disease is attended with profuse debilitating Hoemorrhages, it is necessary to throw astringent injections up the rectum, such as a solution of lead or Zinc. It is also recommended to make pressure, immediately on the mouths of the bleeding vessels, by introducing a pigs or sheeps gut up the rectum, which is to be tied at the upper end, and filled from the lower with some cold fluid, by means of a syringe. But when we reflect, that this body acts as a kind of suppository, exciting the gut to contraction, which is at the same time attended with a relaxation of the sphincter, we may reasonably conclude, that it would not have the desired effect.

But every practitioner can tell how unavailing in some cases all medical treatment is, Our last resort is to Surgery. which generaley brings relief,

The operations performed for the removal of this disease

one of two kinds. The Simple & Ligature — both are said to be safe and effectual. but when we reflect on the great vascularity of the parts to be operated on I should think there would be great danger of Hemorrhage in the first operation. To the second it is objected that it is attended with great pain and irritation which in some instances produces the most violent symptoms. Mr Hume obviates these objections by his mode of operating. He passes a needle armed with a double ligature, through the base of the tumour, ties each portion very firmly and then divides the intermediate vessels. this by taking off the tension of the vessels prevents the pain, irritation and other violent symptoms so much dreaded, while at the same time it precludes the possibility of Hemorrhage —

Lewis